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Justice needed for the poor

by Art Babych

Canada's legal aid program is in trouble and not meeting the needs of the country's poor, says the National Council of Welfare.

Particularly hard hit are Aboriginal people who "are not only more likely to be sent to jail, but also more likely to be charged with and found guilty of criminal offences," the council said in a 90-page report released January 11, entitled *Legal Aid and the Poor*.

Noting "skyrocketing" costs are leading to cutbacks in some provincial legal aid plans, the council, a citizen's advisory body to the Minister of Human Resources Development, concluded, however, that better management—not money—is needed.

"We suggest important changes to ensure that the main beneficiaries of legal aid will no longer be lawyers, but low-income people."

Terming Natives the "poorest of the poor," the report said the main difficulty is that many Natives live in rural or remote northern communities where legal aid services are difficult to obtain or inaccessible. It also pointed out the rate of domestic assaults had reached "epidemic proportions in Aboriginal homes."

While poor people often do not recognize they have a legal problem, the report stated, lawyers "tend to think that the solution to most problems is litigation."

One alternative proposed by the council was to divert first offenders—especially young people—away from the court system before charges are laid. They could then be sent to a variety of community-based groups, such as Manitoba Aboriginal youth committees, it suggested.

The Aboriginal Justice Inquiry in Manitoba has supported the diversion measure in the past for several reasons. They include the belief that bringing youths into the criminal justice system might turn them into or brand them as criminals.

However, the council said Aboriginal women are concerned about the diversion approach, particularly in cases involving family violence and sexual offences. "Many feel that violence against women is too serious for the typically mild solutions proposed and that soft treatment is unlikely to discourage offenders from committing the same crimes again."



The council also proposed abolishing imprisonment for fines and said it was "scandalous" that close to 50,000 admissions to provincial jails in 1992-93 were for failure to pay fines.

"It is made even worse by the fact that a disproportionate number of those who go to jail for fines are Aboriginal people."

Among the council's recommendations:

- Legal aid plans should be independent of governments and lawyers' groups;
- There must be tighter control over the quality of the various legal aid plans;
- All legal aid plans should have accountants to independent watchdogs;
- The criminal justice system should make greater use of diversion in dealing with minor offences;

• Governments "should recognize the strong links which exist between poverty, child abuse and neglect, unemployment, inequality and crime" and give support to measures to correct the problems.

The council noted the first legal aid programs were charitable services provided free of charge by lawyers with a "strong sense of justice."

Since then, however, legal aid "has become an industry largely run by lawyers for the benefit of lawyers," the council said.

"The time has come for legal aid to be directed by people whose main goal will be to grant equal access to justice to the poor."

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Manitoba bands take step to self-government

by James Martin

"Today the eyes of the First Nations people across the country are on the Manitoba Chiefs," declared Indian Affairs Minister Ron Irwin at a landmark ceremony in Winnipeg between Ottawa and the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs.

A lawyer for the chiefs, Jack London, called it "a revolution in Canada's history," while Grand Chief of the Assembly, Phil Fontaine, called it "the beginning of the end of the Indian Act."

The deal gives long sought-after authority to Native bands to control their own destiny, begins the dismantling of the Indian Affairs Department and signals, according to the government minister, a "fundamentally new" understanding between the federal government and Aboriginal peoples.

Grand Chief Phil Fontaine reassured those who may feel the agreement is not a positive initiative by stating, "Some people ask, who will look after us when Indian Affairs disappears. The answer is, we will."

The process of taking apart Indian Affairs has a high price tag, almost a million dollars so far and another \$5 million by the end of the next year. The time line for complete Native control is now estimated at 10 years.

Though the expenditures for restructuring and consultations are expen-



sive, the sums pale beside the \$1 billion Native Affairs spends in Manitoba every year.

While the agreement signals the government's present intentions, hopes can often be betrayed by mistrust, something Irwin recognized.

"The main thing we had to do was to establish trust because there was so much mistrust."

"The major thing we have to ensure from here on is that other negotiations going on are not used to bring down the central core model; that if someone is dissatisfied with another piece of negotiations they don't say,

we want to walk away. It would be a mistake if that happened."

The agreement is expected to serve as a model for other Native bands across the country and will be watched carefully.

One of the principal points of the agreement is the "creation of wealth" for Native bands, says Phil Fontaine.

This will come about through new initiatives to be undertaken by and controlled by Native bands themselves.

The agreement outlines new boundaries for Native people to take control of their lives and ensures that in future all contracts or dealings will be protected under Section 35 of the Constitution.

The present agreement has a very wide range of language employed throughout which allows, say some opponents, for dissension which may splinter the purpose of the initiative.

For example, there are options available for bands who wish to stay under federal authority and that for the agreement to take full effect, a "reasonable number" of the bands in Manitoba must vote to accept the proposals.

SILENCE

by Rod Durocher

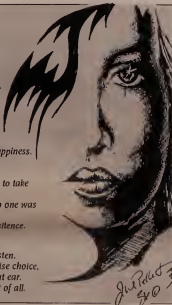
*In every individual there is love.
For every problem there is pain.
In order for me to soar like a dove,
First I must hurt so I can move again.*

*Sometimes I ask myself
"Why must I go through with this?"
And when I remember the wisdom
Of our inner selves, I say,
Without sadness in life there is no happiness.*

*So when I see someone hurt
I want to help, I want to hold, I want to take
away their pain.*

*After I reflect a bit I can remember no one was
there to tell me things
I wanted to hear... I learned to trust silence.*

*As I sit here I can feel his pain,
So I stay awhile to listen — just to listen.
For from experience I made a most wise choice,
Not to lecture, not to talk, just a silent ear.
After all, isn't silence the greatest gift of all.*



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GET IT IN A WINK!!

Reform MP challenges DIA spending

by John Copley

Until recently, British Columbia MP Dick Harris (Reform), had been just one of three opposition critics who busied themselves watch-dogging the Department of Indian Affairs. Now he has a new job and a new mission. This new full time position will see Harris head up a group that will involve itself in an in-depth investigation of the federal department responsible for the nation's Indian population.

In a recent statement made to the Canadian Press in Ottawa, Harris said that he was going to make it his job to see that the DIA was held accountable for "the gross lack of accountability in the programs, (and) the gross lack of monitoring of the effectiveness and the results of the programs" currently run by the department.

When Auditor General Denis Desautel issued his report last month, it



Northern Development Public Meeting

Cold Lake

Thursday, February 9, 7:00 PM
Seniors Drop-In Centre

The NADC will hold a public meeting in Cold Lake on February 9. We invite you or your organization to present a brief on social or economic development in your area. This meeting is also a chance to meet local community leaders and elected officials.

The NADC is an advisory group to the provincial cabinet. Its chairman is Wayne Jacques, MLA Grande Prairie-Wapiti. Issues or ideas raised at the Cold Lake meeting will be followed up by the NADC.

For more information about the meeting, contact the Northern Development Branch at 624 6275 (Toll free dial 310-0000)

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pointed out some embarrassing statistics, and provided the stimulus the Reform Party needed to launch the 'posse' to investigate why "the history of Indian Affairs has been that the answer to solving the problems that have been created among Native people has simply been to throw money at the problem and hope that it goes away."

The report showed that the next social assistance (funding) budget would see an increase that would bring the totals for this one area alone to more than \$1 billion. The report also indicated that the number of people depending on this social assistance funding, would also continue to rise.

Harris said that though he is interested in seeing that taxpayers' money was being properly spent, he also wanted to improve life for Native people.

"We've got these billions of dollars being spent," emphasized Harris, "and yet you go to the reserves and the rank-and-file Indians are still living pretty well in abject poverty."

Two other MPs will also be involved in the investigation as will a researcher and a judicial accountant.

Harris said the primary goal of his 'posse' will be to determine where the billions of dollars spent each year by the Department of Indian Affairs is going. He says he feels that with the amount of money being spent, progress should be evident, especially in areas of economic development and social well being.

The Reform Party 'posse' was established last fall in an effort to clean up government by pointing out and creating public awareness as to where the waste and abuse in government was most flagrant.

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News Briefs

Indian Act fosters financial dependence

"The Indian Act is racist," says Justice Frank Muldoon of the Federal Court of Canada. In a decision January 5, the judge said the Act "makes financial dependants of those who pay no taxes as an eternal charge on those who are taxed to meet the expense of such dependency."

His comments were made in a ruling dismissing an attempt by the Canadian Human Rights Commission on behalf of a B.C. Native mother. She had wanted the Indian Affairs Department to pay for the boarding costs of her daughter to attend a private Catholic school.

Muldoon noted that while it is illegal to discriminate on the basis of religion under the Canadian Human Rights Act, the Act contains an override clause that states nothing in it affects provisions of the Indian Act. The judge said the Indian Act and other Aboriginal treaties fostered "an establishment of apartheid in Canada."

Public education needed regarding Aboriginal rights

Education and public awareness is key to the public understanding the rights of Aboriginal people, says Wayne Helgason, president of the National Association of Friendship Centres. Helgason was responding to the tax reform protest by Aboriginals at the Revenue Canada Taxation Centre in Toronto. He said there's a common misconception that Aboriginal people don't pay taxes. "Those Aboriginal people who do not pay personal income tax are exercising their rights respecting the existing federal taxation laws and doing proper tax planning," he said. But they represent only a small portion of the total urban Aboriginal population, he pointed out. The association notes there are about 750,000 urban Aboriginal people living and working off reserve and paying an estimated \$4.5 billion in taxes each year.



Aboriginal Shield Program launched

The Aboriginal Shield Program is being launched this month in Edmonton.

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police, in co-operation with the Neechi Institute on Alcohol and Drug Education, have jointly developed the Aboriginal Shield Program, which has been designed to address the pressing need for culturally appropriate drug and alcohol prevention programs for Aboriginal youth. The program has been designed so Aboriginal students could gain a sense of connection with and pride in their culture. This is an essential component of all successful Aboriginal substance abuse prevention and treatment programs.

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Alberta Metis "Otipemisiwak" Commission (AMOC): Metis Nation needs "clean-up"

The Commissioners of the Alberta Metis "Otipemisiwak" Commission (AMOC) are recommending that the Metis Nation clean up their act organizationally in their final report which was derived from consultations and public meetings with the Metis communities in Alberta.

The final report reveals that the Metis people in Alberta have voiced their concerns regarding their political organization, Metis Nation of Alberta (Association), and have strongly recommended to clean up the MNA(A)'s By-Laws to provide stability and to steer the Nation into the 21st Century.

The above noted conclusive recommendation is based on many of the recommendations, over 1,500, received by the Commissioners appointed to the Alberta Metis "Otipemisiwak" Commission (AMOC). During the duration of the Commission, the mandate of the Alberta Metis "Otipemisiwak" Commission (AMOC) was to conduct public meetings throughout Alberta and travel within their respective six Zones of the MNA(A) to obtain recommendations.

The 1,500 recommendations collected by the Commissioners are categorized into, but not limited to:

- Recommendations to change the Objects and the Bylaws of the Metis Nation of Alberta (Association);
- Recommendations to change the Structure of the Metis Nation of Alberta (Association), specifically, the creation of a Metis Executive Council, including the Number and Election of the Executive Council; Removal and Vacancy of the Executive Council, Meetings of the Executive Council, etc.
- Recommendations on Principles to reform the Metis Senate and to



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To All the Metis People of Alberta

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The Commissioners of the Alberta Metis "Otipemisiwak" Commission (AMOC) are hereby serving notice to the elected Metis representatives and the general membership of the Metis Nation of Alberta (Association) that there is a...



SPECIAL ASSEMBLY

January 28 & 29, 1995

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The SPECIAL ASSEMBLY is open to all card carrying Metis members of the MNA and you must be registered with the main central registry to be eligible to vote.
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Registration: Edmonton Inn, Starting at noon, Friday, January 27, 1995.
Closing Registration at noon, January 29, 1995.

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establish the Metis Judiciary Council, the Metis Council of Elders, the Electoral Commission, including the establishment of Metis Special Commissions;

- Recommendations to establish By-Laws on Conflict of Interest and the reactivation of the Metis Election By-Laws: both to provide guidelines for candidates, elected representatives and Metis election;
- Recommendations to revamp/change the administrative policies of the Metis Nation of Alberta (Association);

• Recommendations to address the social, economic, educational, housing issues of concern by the elected representatives of the Metis Nation of Alberta (Association), specifically, the full use of the MNA/Alberta Framework Agreement;

- Recommendations to address the issues of concern focusing on the "Inherent Right" to Metis Self-Government through the Canada/Alberta/MNA Tripartite Agreement;
- Recommendations to draft a specific Metis Constitution to address the Principles, including Citizenship of the Metis Nation, as demonstrated

Continued on Page 13



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Sit-in supported by Native leaders

by Art Babych

Native tax protesters occupying a Revenue Canada building in downtown Toronto since December 14 have the active support of Ontario Aboriginal leaders.

"It appears, by osmosis, the (historical) rules have changed," Gordon Peters, Ontario regional chief of the Assembly of First Nations said at a news conference January 9.

Suddenly, Natives are "being asked to pay taxes to a government... that acts as our fiduciary and our trustee," Peters said.

About 20 Natives continued their occupation of the Toronto offices in protest over new Revenue Canada guidelines requiring Natives who work off reserves to pay income tax.

The protesters and the Ontario chiefs have agreed the main issue in the dispute is the First Nations historical right to tax immunity.

They also said the first step to resolve the dispute is for the federal

government to rescind the Revenue Canada guidelines.

Afterward, a protocol should be developed describing the tax relationships between governments and Natives, they said.

"Until we are able to establish a process of being able to deal with the fiscal relations, we're not going to be able to talk about the full implementation of our inherent right," said Peters.

"Nor are we going to be able to show people how we are going to get off the welfare rolls... increase economically... and be able to move toward our idea of how we can be self-sufficient."

In the treaty making process the question of jurisdiction over taxation and duties was never discussed with Aboriginal people, the Ontario chiefs have said. "Payment of such taxes would constitute a massive fraud in view of the First Nations' agreement to permit access to natural resources."

The chiefs, in a "Taxation Update," said the courts and Revenue Canada have "systematically chipped away" at the "limited form of protection" offered under Section 87 of the Indian Act.

Peters also dismissed as a "myth," the perception of some Canadians that Aboriginals don't pay taxes. He said taxes such as the GST, excise, duty and income taxes "are paid by one segment of our people or another, across the board."

In a letter addressed to all First Nations people, Peters said Natives cannot allow Revenue Canada to define the tax exemption as being tied only to work and residence on reserve. "All fundamental First Nation rights apply beyond the reserve boundaries," he said.

The Ontario chiefs had been unsuccessful in getting a meeting with Prime Minister Jean Chretien. Peters also said there has been no official response to a petition sent to the prime minister requesting a mediator in the dispute.

The government has claimed there is nothing to negotiate. Departmental briefing notes state the new guidelines "are the result of extensive consultation with Aboriginal groups and individuals."

They also call Revenue Canada's decision to tax Natives who work off reserves as a "fair reflection" of the 1992 Supreme Court ruling on the matter.

However, the notes state the government "remains open to dialogue with Aboriginal people on broader taxation issues."



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MNA President signs off sick

by John Copley

Metis Nations of Alberta (MNA) President Gerald Thom is taking an extended leave of absence and has passed the reins of power to his Senior Vice President, Lyle Donald.

The announcement, which came during the association's annual Christmas party, was a surprise to many. Donald says that he hopes to step in to provide positive direction and a bright future for the Nation while Thom is away from the helm of the organization.

"Gerald will be away for about six months," explained Donald who added that the January 27-28 "special meeting will still be held, as planned," at the Edmonton Inn.

The theme of the up-coming meeting, says Lyle, "has been misunderstood by some of our members out there." He said that word had reached him that "there are some who think this meeting is a continuance of the Annual Assembly, but this is not the case."

Donald said that the "special meeting was called in order that our membership can be informed of the progress of the Commission" which has been travelling throughout Alberta in order to help establish a new set of bylaws and to help bring us a new constitution."

Donald says that the ailing President-elect is expected to return to work after his sick leave is over but that in the meantime he has "given me his confidence and his full support."

Donald has had several meetings with the association's board of directors and informs this reporter that "we are on track. I have the full support of the board and together we will work to make this Nation grow."

Donald said "it will be an informal meeting that will discuss, among other things, the tripartite agreement and Minister Axworthy's new ideas" that do not seem to include or make provision for the Metis.

Donald has indicated that he will put the importance of the family at the top of his priority list. In a previous interview the new MNA President said that "the family is what our society is all about. I feel that in order to be successful as a people, we must have the confidence and the cooperation of the people we serve."

The special meeting at the Edmonton Inn later this month should provide some of the answers to those who are uncertain of their role in the community. Everyone is welcome to attend, assured Donald, saying that "we'd like to see a good turnout and I am confident that this will be the case."

A Tribute to Youth

Meno Opikhiwawin: a home for boys

by Peter McKay, *Transition*

In Cree, Meno Opikhiwawin means "The Good Nurturing Centre." At Cross Lake, Manitoba, some 744 km north of Winnipeg, the meaning of the word really hits home. Meno Opikhiwawin is a home for boys.

Behind Meno Opikhiwawin is the story of one woman's dream, and how her persistence, stamina and inspiration made it a reality.

The story began four years ago when children on the Cross Lake Reserve were being neglected because of parents' problems with alcohol abuse. Christine McKay kept thinking about the children, and one evening, unable to sleep, she found herself sitting outside. "I could see the old mission building across the river, she says. 'I knew it was empty and was being destroyed. This was the seed that got me kind of thinking. Gee! It's too bad that the building could not be repaired and be used.'"

Christine, who today is director of the home, started her research work right away, and got on the phone. "I used to work in group homes and worked with children most of my adult life," she says. "I started researching it, then I had to define the project and kind of fine tune it. I did the proposal on establishing a home while I was working for the Awasis Agency. The band council knew what I was doing, and they were very supportive of my initiative."

"After I got the okay from the council, I had Health Canada come over and check if the building structure was safe. In order for the inspector from Health Canada to get in, we had to crawl through a window," she recalls. Vandalism had taken its toll on the building, and walls had been torn down.

Christine did not give up on her dream because of the state of the building. Then Health Canada confirmed that its structure was sound, even though it was built in 1936. The wood had been preserved, possibly by freezing when the building first went up.



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With the building approved by the inspector, Christine started "hammering away at different agencies" trying to raise funds for the renovation. She was able to tap into a Human Resources Development six-week work program, which turned out to be enough time to renovate the building completely. "The plumbing and equipment were donated by the band. Later, I got a grant from CAEDS' Aboriginal Economic Programs and a loan from the bank, which basically covered everything we needed to start off."

The boys in Meno Opikhiwawin come from reserves across Manitoba and are generally between 12 and 16 years of age. The home is designed for children who require a little more support than in a foster home. The boys are able to integrate with the community and can attend school with local teachers.

The home's success is partially due to the fact that staff are Cree-speaking First Nations people, sensitive to the boys' cultural needs. Boys sent to Winnipeg for care, on the other hand, experience an overwhelming culture shock combined with the emotional shock of being removed from their home community. Many run away from city-based homes. But at Cross Lake, there is nowhere to run.

Founded on First Nation principles, the home provides a much more comfortable environment for the boys. "None of our staff were raised in

traditional white homes. They were all raised in Native culture; things like boundaries and set bed times aren't our way," explains Christine. And the on-reserve setting makes it easier for the boys to feel their problems.

The Cross Lake community has been very supportive, says Christine. Activities are scheduled for the boys in the community, including cultural awareness sessions and half-days on trap lines where they learn to better appreciate their traditions. Community leaders serve as role models and share their experiences with the boys. "Knowing about who you are, and feeling positive, will help your self-image," Christine stresses. "Many of the boys are from several-generation alcoholic families. The community activities give them a different perspective on being Native."

It was Christine McKay's vision and determination that brought the idea of the home for boys to reality. She also extends a special heartfelt thanks to the hard-working, dedicated staff who helped get the group home to where it is today. For more information, contact Christine McKay at (204) 676-2159.

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Students' artwork to help fund Florida field trip

by Dale Stelter

Students at Edmonton's Ben Calf Robe School are contributing their artwork to help raise funds for a science field trip to Florida.

The student population at Ben Calf Robe School consists entirely of Native and Metis youths, attending junior high grades.

The field trip is planned for this spring, and would see approximately 20 grade 9 students visit the Kennedy Space Centre. The students would also visit the Magic Kingdom, and the Educational Prototype Community of Tomorrow Centre, a facility which features cultures from all over the world.

Fundraising activities for the trip include the production and selling of a calendar of Native art, with all of the artwork provided

by Ben Calf Robe students. According to science teacher Dan Cavanagh, who developed the idea for the field trip, the calendar will contribute about \$12,000 of the \$30,000 needed for the trip.

About 2,000 calendars will be produced and then sold in the western provinces. As well, the school is looking for businesses who would like to sponsor a calendar page, at \$250 for a page.

Other fundraising activities include a recent Native craft sale held at Londonderry Mall, popcorn and bake sales, and a silent auction to be held on January 20. The silent auction will be followed by a round dance from 7 p.m. till midnight.

Dan Cavanagh said that the field trip will make an immense contribution to the students' education, and enhance their education in ways that could never be achieved in the classroom. As Mr. Cavanagh hopes to make the field trip an annual event, it can also act as an incentive for students to stay in school, and—to increase their chances of



Suzanne Demas '95

going on the trip—apply themselves to their studies.

Anyone wishing to obtain more information on the field trip, or to make a charitable donation, can contact Dan Cavanagh at 471-2360. Donations are tax deductible.

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Wanted: Youth participation

by John Copley

They call themselves the Eagle Nation Youth Council—and this group of free-spirited volunteers say that if they can get participation from the province's youth—the sky's the limit.

Though several of the organizing members of the collective had often talked of forming a body for youth over the past six years, it was only after having attended the Metis Nation's "Conference that everything fell into place.

"Within a month of that conference," remembered co-founders Shane Blyan and Nathaniel Arcand, "we had our first two meetings but things aren't quite as easy as they seem sometimes." The difficulty, they say, comes in retaining the interest of potential members.

"We've had a few people come out to the meetings but getting them to return two or three times in a row has proven harder than I imagined," says Blyan.

Arcand agrees but says that having a home base could help solve a few of the problems being encountered by the group. "It is difficult to promote gatherings of youth if you have nowhere to meet," he remarked adding that the location problem has now been solved.

And the problem solver is none other than Zone 4 Vice President and acting President of the Metis Nation, Lyle Donald whose Zone office is located at the Canadian Native Friendship Centre on 101 Street and 112 Avenue in Edmonton.

Often speaking up on behalf of youth, Donald, who has been encouraging all members with concerns to contact him, has kept his word and willingly provided help to the members of the Eagle Nations Youth Council.

"The conference (planned and co-ordinated by Donald) was a real eye-opener," added Blyan, who says his group got "the final push of encouragement and confidence when we attended" that meeting. Blyan had been a conference participant and had acted as one of the panel members on the Youth committee.

Donald has given the group some working space in the Zone 4 offices as well as some limited secretarial help for their mailing and other typing requirements. He also donated \$150 to cover concession fees for the group's inaugural get-together—a dance on January 13.

What are the intentions of the Eagle Nation Youth group? How do they feel they can generate interest in the youth?

Arcand said that it is the "lack of action in the past by our leaders to do more than talk" that will make the difference. "We feel our time is here. People, especially the younger generation, are now ready to participate—it's just a matter of helping them to retrain themselves and showing them the meaning of commitment—something that many are lacking because of



Eagle Nation Youth Council, left to right: Nathaniel Arcand, Alexis Grandbois, Shane Blyan

past failures by our leadership to have our youth participate in a meaningful way."

Blyan added that "over the past years many have said that it is the youth of today that will be the future of tomorrow. We have all heard these words and are gladdened by them, but in reality, they have only been words. Seldom has a concentrated effort been put forth to ensure that our youth will indeed be a viable and contributing factor to the future of our Nation."

Helping youth to identify their individual problem areas and then offering constructive programs to help eliminate these problems is one of the goals of the Council.

"It is our intention," say both Arcand and Blyan, "to expand this small group into a large body that will provide an alternative for youth. This

Continued on Page 19

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Liberty Street is about being twenty-something in the '90s. From creator/producer Linda Schuyler, the award-winning producer of the *Degrassi* series, *Liberty Street* focuses on a group of young adults trying to carve out their own identities and destinies.

The *Liberty Street* characters, living in "The Pit," a low-rent, rundown industrial building, are vibrant, young, sexy and real. They toss and turn with doubts. They work. They dream. And through it all, they share a sense of humour.

Frank (Pat Mastroianni) is an aspiring songwriter and music biz wannabe, Annie (Henriette Ivananas) is a neo-hippie whose "straight" job hampers her quest for meaning, Mack (Joel Bissonnette) is a recovering addict and ex-con, looking for a new life, and Janet (Kimberly Hui) is a single mother student, trying to raise her seven-year-old daughter Christine (Melissa Daniel).

The ensemble cast includes: Nathan (Billy Merasty), a gay Cree looking for a place to be



Billy Merasty and Marcia Laskowski are part of the ensemble cast of *LIBERTY STREET*, which debuts on January 11 at 8:30 p.m. on CBC TV

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Native abuse victims of priest to receive aid

by Art Babych

Some Native victims of physical and sexual abuse by a Jesuit priest in Southern Ontario more than a decade ago will soon be getting help.

Ruth Roulette, an official of the Payuktayno Family Services near Moosonee, was named December 13 as assessor of the claims of about 15 Natives at Cape Croker. They had signed a "reconciliation" agreement

with the Jesuits, worth a total of \$2.4 million.

Once Roulette, born in a Manitoba Ojibway community, validates the claims of each victim, the committee set up to implement the agreement is expected to authorize a cash settlement of \$25,000.

As well, the claimants and their families will have access to \$4,000 from a Vocational Opportunity Fund, financial and personal counselling and also receive an apology from the Jesuits of Upper Canada.

Roulette was named assessor the same day as the implementation committee met with Chief Ralph Akiwenzie and the band council at Cape Croker.

"Lack of information fosters needless questioning and at times suspicion," said Implementation Committee chair, former MP Walter McLean. "It is our desire to be open and to communicate freely."

McLean said the agreement is "a step towards bringing justice to people who have been treated unjustly." He added child abuse is "one of the greatest forms of injustice."

McLean described as "heartbreaking," the abuse by Father George Epoch, who was pastor of St. Mary's Church in Cape Croker from 1972 until 1983. He died in 1986.

The former MP noted there may be some victims of Epoch who won't sign the reconciliation agreement and may "pursue other avenues." Under the agreement, the claimants waived their right to launch lawsuits against the Jesuits.

However, some in the community say the settlement doesn't go far enough. About 30 protesters picketed December 1 in front of the Archdiocese of Toronto's offices, calling for "ongoing financial support" for the Native community, including money for a healing centre.

But the Jesuits noted they had already paid \$2 million informally over a two-year period, which would raise the total payout to about \$4.4 million.

The implementation committee is to announce shortly the names of the counselling advisory group that will supervise the three-year \$500,000 counselling program. The group is to consist of a representative of the victims, the Band council and the Jesuits.

The reconciliation agreement allows for more victims of abuse by Epoch to sign up before May 1, 1995. While it isn't known how many were abused, a figure of 40 has been put forward.




"Clean-up" Continued from Page 6

historically and entrenched in Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution, and legally endorsed by the Supreme Court of Canada, and

- Recommendations to conclude on-going developmental plans to accommodate and facilitate the transitional phases as required to transform the Metis Nation of Alberta (Association) from that of a Societies Act to that of Metis Nationhood.

"The recommendations collected from the Metis communities strongly enforce the need to transform our provincial political vehicle into a mode of rethinking to consider the future needs/wants/aspirations of the Metis communities in Alberta," said Marina Brothers, chairperson of the Alberta Metis "Otipemisiwak" Commission.

Prior to the establishment of the Alberta Metis "Otipemisiwak" Commission (AMOC), there was a demand from the members of the Metis Nation of Alberta to have the organization driven by a "Bottom-Up" approach to resolve some of the disputes/issues of concern within the MNA.



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
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Flying High at Geodesy: A profile of Ken Ruben

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"I've always wanted to be a pilot," says Ken Ruben, an Inuvialuit from Paulatuk, Northwest Territories. Together, Ken and his father saved enough money to send Ken to the Lethbridge Flying Club for two years in 1992 and 1993. There, Ken received his private flying license. Now he plans to return to Alberta to receive his commercial license, and his multi-engine and Instrument Flight Rating ratings. Last summer, Ken was given the chance to get a head start on his training by taking part in a new air photo internship program.

The air photo program was created by a consortium which was inspired by Aklak Air in Inuvik, NWT, and involved Geodesy Remote Sensing and Foto Flight from Calgary, Alberta. Geodesy and Foto Flight are both aerial photographic survey companies. Aklak Air is owned by the Inuvialuit Development Corporation (IDC), representing the Inuvialuit in the Western Arctic. Headquartered in Inuvik, IDC encourages its southern partners to participate in providing employment and training opportunities for the Inuvialuit.

The internship involved hiring one northern trainee who would receive exposure to all facets of air photo work during the summer season. The program was divided into two parts, Aircraft Operations and Laboratory Operations. Ken spent the first part of the program travelling with the photo aircraft and crew, and the second part in the processing labs of Foto Flight and Geodesy.

The trainee position was designed to give a candidate the opportunity to learn about air photo operations. In Ken's case it gave him the chance to gain some hands on flying experience, and to improve his piloting skills. During his training, Ken was exposed to Northern flying and long cross country flights. He learned all aspects of flight planning, and gained experience as a pilot navigator for photo survey missions.

Patrick Gropp, the owner of Geodesy, is very excited about the development of this internship. He realizes the growing need for partnerships between companies such as his own, and those of the North like IDC. Patrick would like to eventually keep a plane in the North, and have it managed full-time by Northerners such as Ken.



Ken Ruben

Patrick hopes that the program will continue to run next year. Albeit he was so pleased with Ken's performance that he has already stated an interest in having Ken return next year. He says, "Ken expressed an interest in being involved again next year. Depending on the success of my company, I would offer Ken a job as a co-pilot survey navigator, now that he has had enough exposure this year with our photographer."

To attain his commercial license, Ken needs a letter from a prospective employer saying that they would seriously consider hiring him once he has completed his training. While Patrick is aware that Ken's long term interests are not in photo-survey, he is willing to sponsor Ken, and to offer him as much encouragement as he can.

Describing this summer as a "win, win" situation, Ken appreciates Patrick's help. He believes the internship gave him a lot of exposure and insight into new aspects of flying that he had not

Continued on Page 24

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Ron Irwin named honorary Chief

Frog Lake First Nation honoured the Minister of Indian Affairs last month by bestowing on him the status of honorary chief.

This is the first time Ron Irwin has been made an honorary chief.

Following the solemn pipe ceremony during which four pipes were passed among elders and honoured guests, elder Maurice Lewis spoke on behalf of the band's elders when he announced Kikispowpesim kapata'kosit—"Voice in the Rising Sun" as Mr. Irwin's name in recognition of the nature and magnitude of the minister's work.

"The values of the Cree people," said Elder Peter Waskahat, "are love, understanding, honesty, caring, sharing and, most of all, spirituality. The elders are giving you directions, Mr. Minister, to remember each morning to pray to the Creator."

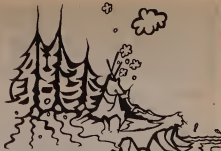
Elder Maurice Lewis presented Mr. Irwin with a beaded buckskin vest and placed on his head the headdress adorned with black-tipped, white eagle feathers.

"This is a great honour that I will treasure all my life, said Mr. Irwin. "This honour will give me strength and knowledge."

"Your people have been here for 10,000 years and the Europeans but a few hundred. We thought we were smarter, we weren't. We found we didn't have the answers. We haven't even asked yet."

"Don't ask me to lead because I may not know the way. Don't ask me to follow because I may not be able to keep up. Let me walk beside you and together we will find the answers."

Chief Thomas Abraham of Frog Lake First



Nation, which is located about 200 kilometres east of Edmonton, closed the ceremony.

Rosemarie Kuptana: Inuit role model

by Raymond Lawrence, *Transitions*

Rosemarie Kuptana stands out as an outstanding role model for her valuable input and role in carving the future for the Inuit people. She is presently serving her second term as president of the Inuit Tapirisist of Canada (ITC) representing some 40,000 Inuit from the Northwest Territories, Northern Quebec and Labrador.

Before serving as president of the ITC, Kuptana had already made outstanding contributions to the North through her work with the Inuit Broadcasting Corporation (IBC), as Canadian vice-president of the Inuit Circumpolar Conference, and through her hook on the prevention of child sexual abuse in Inuit communities entitled *No More Secrets*. During her time with IBC she initiated journalistic and administrative policies, training programs for production staff, and management and planning processes, as well as being instrumental

in launching an Inuktitut-language children's program and other innovative programs. She is also currently co-chairing the International Arctic Council.

Ms. Kuptana's contributions have been widely recognized with numerous awards including the Order of Canada in 1989, the Governor General's 125th Anniversary of the Confederation of Canada Medal and a National Aboriginal Achievement Award. In 1992, she was named Northerner of the Year, and recently, Ms. Kuptana received an Honorary Doctorate of Laws degree from Trent University.



Rosemarie Kuptana

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HARD WORK PAYS OFF: A profile of Stephan Pertschy

Having once been content to barely finish high school, Stephan Pertschy explains how education and hard work have opened a world of opportunities to him, including the chance to take part in a career development program at Norterra Inc., in Alberta.

"I am not old by many peoples' standards, but I have gained wisdom, mostly by learning things the hard way," says Stephan Pertschy, a thirty-one year old Inuvialuit of Edmonton, Alberta. Stephan believes furthering his education and experiences as a student have made him wise beyond his years.

Education, knowledge, and experience have helped to land Stephan a position in a career development work experience program at Norterra Inc., in Edmonton, Alberta. Norterra is a holding and management company whose interests are chiefly in the transportation and manufacturing sectors. The company is jointly owned by the Inuvialuit Development Corporation (IDC), representing the Inuvialuit in the Western Arctic, and Nunasi Corporation, representing Inuit of Nunavut. Norterra, located in the south, has initiated a program to provide career development, employment, and training opportunities for its parent companies' beneficial shareholders.

Stephan is a beneficial shareholder and was employed in 1992 in one of Norterra's subsidiary companies Northern Transportation Company Limited (NTCL). There, Stephan worked his summers in Hay River, Northwest Territories while completing his Bachelor of Commerce Degree at the University of Alberta. Following completion of his degree, Stephan transferred to Norterra Inc. under its career development program where he will gain a broad range of business experience.

At Norterra, Stephan will divide his time over

the next year between four of Norterra's subsidiaries: Grimshaw Trucking and Distributing Ltd., Valgro Ltd., SRI Homes Inc., and Northern Transportation Company Limited. Following this, he hopes to continue with his education in a graduate program in September 1995. "My long-term goal is to become an efficient and effective manager with Norterra," says Stephan.

As someone who was once content to have barely finished high school, Stephan feels he has come a long way. Having recently completed the Bachelor of Commerce program at the University of Alberta, he speaks openly of his experiences as a student, and the opportunities and benefits which an education can provide.

"My high school experience was not as pleasant as I would have liked because I was unsure what to do with my life. I had difficulty connecting what I was being taught to how it would benefit me in the future," he explains. "I never knew if I could enroll in a higher level program because I never pushed myself to learn."

Shortly after finishing high school, Stephan realized that to be a high school graduate with average grades meant enduring a lot of frustration. He discovered the only job opportunities available to him were unfavourable, offering poor pay and working conditions, and long hours. Eventually Stephan says, "I grew tired of hearing others around me complain about their bad situation. I became tired of hearing myself tell others that they should have got an education. I finally decided to do something about it."

Stephan enrolled in three upgrading courses to improve his high school average while keeping a full time job. This period, he says, required careful time-management, and a firm commitment to learn. "The hardest part about changing my unfavourable situation was making the decision to improve myself, and then setting some short and long term goals."



Stephan Pertschy

After upgrading his high school marks, Stephan's first goal was to gain acceptance into a one-year University transfer course at Grant MacEwan Community College. With this achieved, he then set his sights on attaining a high enough academic average to transfer to the University of Alberta. Once again he met his challenge, but not without having to work hard.

In his first year of university, Stephan found it difficult to keep up with the fast pace the professors used to teach the course material. He found

Continued on Page 18

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Alberta Bands say NO to hazardous waste

by John Copley

The Indian Association of Alberta (IAA) and the Lesser Slave Lake Indian Regional Council have filed court documents that they hope will inevitably prevent hazardous waste from being transported into the province. The lawyers for the nine Indian Bands involved say they are seeking to appeal a November/94 ruling that allows hazardous waste to be imported from out-of-province.

The two groups are claiming that the Natural Resources Conservation Board did not fully investigate all the consequences of allowing hazardous waste to be brought to the Swan Hills treatment plant.

A report filed by the complainants' lawyer, Richard Secord, claims the financial losses at the Swan Hills plant have been heavy in the past, and indicates that even if the province imports additional waste, the annual losses would continue to be in the \$20 to \$30 million range.

"The board failed to weigh the evidence with respect to the hazardous waste market in Canada," said Secord. "The board failed to determine the public subsidies required and the effect of those subsidies on the public interest."

The province has agreed to subsidize the Swan Hills plant until the year 2008 and Secord says that the \$600 to \$700 million of public money that would be needed to see the project to its conclusion, just "isn't good enough".

In addition to money paid by waste generators

to have hazardous substances disposed of, the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation has confirmed that it has been adding a subsidy (1994) of about \$2,000 per tonne in order to properly dispose of the waste materials.

The provincial cabinet has yet to ratify the Conservation Board's ruling on hazardous waste. Secord says the Board "did not do their homework" before making their decision.

The waste management corporation recently appointed Bob King as its new head. This move comes, says MLA Jon Havelock, the corporation's Chairman of the Board, because of his skills and determination to get the job done. He cited King's past success as chairman of the Alberta Liquor Control Board as the reason he was chosen for this new appointment.

"I think he did a tremendous job with the liquor board and the privatization," said Havelock in a recent press statement. "He gets down to business and I think he's the right guy for the job."

Bruce Collingwood, the Liberal environment

critic, indicated he thought the move to hire King shows that the environment is now being ignored in favour of a plan to concentrate on merchandising and making the waste disposal site a profitable venture.

The Swan Hills treatment plant is currently under a shared ownership which sees the province with a 40% slice of the pie.



Profile Continued from Page 17

his instructors intimidating, and admits that he was too proud to ask for assistance. "I was afraid to ask questions because I was worried that others might think I was stupid. As a student, this is the worst mistake. A student's focus must be on learning and not what others think."

After his first year, Stephan established a strategy to help him to be a more efficient student. This strategy, which made learning easier for Stephan, includes asking questions, sitting in the front row of class, finding a study partner in each class, budgeting time, keeping a positive attitude, learning what resources were available and not worrying about marks. Stephan also realized that instructors appreciate a student who participates in class discussions and asks questions. Involvement in class displays to professors that the student is willing to learn. "If

anything is unclear... ask!" emphasizes Stephan, whose strategy led him to graduate with distinction.

At Norterra, Stephan still uses his student strategy. "Asking questions is helpful in the workplace because it shows your supervisor that you care about the work. It also allows you to better understand how your duties and responsibilities fit into the overall operation of the organization or business."

Stephan believes there are many career opportunities available to those individuals who are willing to commit themselves to learning and self improvement. His employment with Norterra Inc. is just one example. "The learning process is positive, and I strongly encourage others to take advantage of the opportunities which are available."

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Wanted, Continued from Page 11

alternative will be multi-fold in purpose and will be geared to enhancing youth in all aspects of life skills and responsibilities. It will be our goal not to provide censorship or judgment but instead to act as a liaison or role model for youth who wish to better themselves and the surroundings they live and work in."

The leadership of the Eagle Nation Youth Council is not limited to Nathaniel Arcand and Shane Blyan and the latter says the actual "brains and motivator of the entire project is Alexis Grandbois" who has had a major role in putting the organization together. The fourth and final member of the coalition is Jaret Sinclair-Gibson. All four of the founders reside in urban areas and all say they look forward to the day "when we have a strong group that will be representative of the province—not just the large populated cit-

ies."

Metis Settlements are an area that the group wishes to explore in the immediate future. They say that because "our real power, like that of anyone, anywhere, comes from the piece of ground that we own, it is only fitting that we take advantage of our rights to the land base that was set aside in order for the Metis to prosper in Alberta."

Though the group has dances and other fund raising ideas in the works its first real goal says Arcand "is to be a part of the upcoming fourth Aboriginal Youth Conference" which again will be hosted by the Treaty Six First Nations.

"Like any other venture of merit, the success of our goals will be determined by the level of participation we get—both from the youth and from the communities they represent. It is vital that the community at large is aware of who and what we are."

Money, popularity, a lifelong dream. None of

these things provide the motivating factor for this energetic young group.

"It's because we see many of our brothers suffering," said Arcand. "Hardships, loneliness and uncertainty can create a different person—especially if he or she has nowhere to turn," he added saying that it would be the goal of the Council to "encourage active and meaningful participation from members" and to "try to provide alternative thinking so that our youth can learn to create opportunities and then take advantage of the chances they open up for themselves."

Arcand, who is fast becoming known for the fine acting talent he displays in the popular *North of 60* TV series on CBC says it's one of the Council's goals to try "to get youth involved in some theatre. I think that if a troupe was formed they could definitely display their talents. There are thousands of schools and community groups that would love for someone to come in and perform for them."

Other areas and activity agenda ideas include a variety of dances, field trips, movies, arts and crafts, story-sharing, crib tournaments and Elder's functions. "Of course," said Blyan, "our prime directive is to see that we are included on the agenda of meetings and conferences—not only within the Metis Nation—but with other groups as well. It is not only Metis children who are struggling. Kids are kids—we all have that in common."

Further information can be obtained by calling any of the above at the Zone 4 offices in Edmonton, 474-7777.

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION

by Sylvia Gambler

Let's make a resolution together
for the new year.
To make it a better year far ourselves
and for everyone
whether it is to end a bad habit
To put action onto our goals
No matter how hard, how easy
how strange they may seem to others
Let's start looking through our own eyes
if you think you're talented, admit it
Use your talent, let it grow
You will grow along with it
Start seeing only the good in people
You'll be surprised
how much good they have done
Make it a habit to solve problems
as they came along
Stop! Look around you
take a minute to appreciate
what you have going for you
a loving family, friends and good health.
A job and a place to go home to



Acknowledge to your own people
what they mean to you
Before it's too late
Let's not wait until they leave home
or illness takes them away from us
Put your pride aside for once
Make time to listen to your kids and parents
Listen to what they have to say,
hear their message
Learn from them, only good can happen
Accept change as it comes along
Whether its good or bad
Change it if you can, if you can't change it
Then maybe it's time for you to change
Finally, Let's all celebrate for who we are,
what we have and what we've done.



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MacPhee Workshop: tailor-made winter outerwear

by Del Sty

Fashion designer Linda MacPhee is one of Canada's foremost sewing experts who has been a guiding light in the Canadian fashion industry for over 20 years. She produces a line of over 100 patterns and books, does a regular television segment, writes a national magazine column, and is Creative Director of her own chain of cross-Canada franchises.

MacPhee Workshop has, over the years, set the standard for sewing classes stressing fun, function, and creativity. And since not everybody has time to take classes, Linda has produced a series of how-to videos showing the way to create great designs at home.

Linda explained, "We have a big mail order

service. We print 35,000 color catalogs that are sent all over North America.

"For example we have fabulous business relations with communities like Paddle River and High Level, Alberta," she said. "We will receive a phone call from a regular customer requesting the latest information and material to make a parka. We put it in the mail, and in fact, that's what we do really well."

Starting with a basic piece of outerwear, like mukluks, or boots or a duffel coat, MacPhee designs an original by making variations, often employing the inspiration of Native design in the MacPhee line of clothing.

"We combine Native with French, Ukrainian, and other influences and the result is true Canadiana. We are how-to-oriented all the way. Plus we supply materials, right down to the needles and thread. Ironically, many people who craft outerwear in the north get all their materials supplied by us, including the patterns."

Linda believes she has succeeded in liberating craftspeople by supplying them with the essential basic skills to make durable, dependable and impressive clothing.

This wonderful success story for a woman born in Alberta's Peace Country and educated at the University of Alberta began when she started teaching home economics in High Prairie, Alberta. The relations she established then have endured to this day. Furthermore, she acquired more skills, learned how to influence creativity, and found herself in a network of craftspeople.

Her husband, Harris MacPhee, an active partner in the business, was with the R.C.M.P. and had been assigned to the Crime Lab in Edmonton. In 1978 Harris quit the police force and a short time later they started the MacPhee Workshop.

"We're both entrepreneurs by nature. We have since found that our business is pretty constant no matter what shape the economy is in. The outerwear is designed for our climate. Our layered duffel coats feature the same basic design used by the Inuit since before recorded history. One of these coats will keep you warm in fifty below weather."

To buy such a creation direct from MacPhee would cost \$600. Craftspeople can buy the coat's materials for as low as \$300. And there are lighter weight combinations, fewer layers, costing less.

While the creativity shown in MacPhee designs is original, Linda has always put the em-



phasis on teaching the craft of making great lasting clothes. This teaching involves the delivery of workshops to rural communities. It involves the sale of instructional programs including video instruction. And it involves using existing facilities to gather together 10,000 students a year.

"We send our instructors out to a community for two days and they deliver our product and teach people how to put it together. A teacher like Marg Cardinal from Grouard has the ability to teach the importance of workmanship in making lasting garments. And she does it with finesse. Her students become excellent customers of ours."

MacPhee Workshops has gone further and developed programs that go into home economics classes in schools in Ontario.

The business operation of this unique Canadian-style outerwear manufacturing company is not exclusively mail order. Their network of retail fabric shops can be found in ten of Canada's cities.

"We are known across Canada for our selection of outerwear fabrics, plus knits, leathers, and furs. At MacPhee we want to show we are Canadians. The majority of fabrics are Canadian-made. We proudly buy Canadian."

For additional information call MacPhee Workshop at (403) 973-6216.



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The core group and traditional specialists will be seeking six apprentice performers for the 1995 Native Theatre School.

The Centre for Indigenous Theatre invites anyone who is of Aboriginal ancestry, above the age of nineteen and who has performing or traditional experience to apply. Proposals will consist of an application form, picture, resume, essay, video cassette of performance skills and two written references. Application forms and inquiries please contact (416) 972-0871.

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Selection Committee
Centre for Indigenous Theatre
39 Spadina Rd., 2nd Floor
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The Healing Journey

Documentary focusses on youth suicide

Denial, Healing and Hope: The Nishnawbe-Aski Nation Youth Forum on Suicide is a unique one-hour documentary which provides first hand evidence about First Nation communities seeking healing solutions to the suicide epidemic among young people. It presents tragic tales of child abuse, alcoholism and suicide along with pleas from those left behind for relief—to the hurts out into the open. It's about more than surviving. It's about healing.

"Denial, Healing and Hope" challenges all communities to reach out and seek better forms of communication and dialogue across generations. Leaders of the Nishnawbe-Aski Nation also present what they have learned about the process of healing, both at a personal level and at a spiritual community level.

The documentary was produced, edited and written by Larry Sanders in co-operation with the Nishnawbe-Aski Nation and Maclean Hunter Cable TV. It is a stark response to a stark situation. Sanders was given free editorial rein as a journalist in writing the script and he does not "pull any punches". The Nishnawbe-Aski Nation wanted the story told and it is.

The Nishnawbe-Aski Nation (commonly called NAN) is a political coalition of 49 First Nation communities in the far northern part of Ontario, stretching from James Bay on the east to the Ontario-Manitoba border on the west. Like many First Nation communities in Canada, NAN has been experiencing a rash of suicides by young

people. In 1989, NAN Chiefs declared the situation an official "state of emergency" and set up special crisis teams to fly from community to community when suicides were threatened or happened, but these teams quickly became over-taxed. In 1993, after pressuring the Canadian and Ontario governments for months, NAN was successful in convincing the governments to fund a youth-run, youth-designed Forum to begin a process of hearings and healing.

The Forum is a unique combination of a public hearing process, and a culturally-based clinical process. The documentary is based on over 50 hours of raw video tape collected at the first round of hearings, in three different communities. There is also archival television news footage from the Innu in northern Labrador and from Big Cove in New Brunswick, to put what NAN is doing in a national context.

At one level, the documentary is a shocking revelation for people who are not familiar with the "third world" living conditions on northern Ontario reserves, since there is ample evidence of alcohol and substance abuse, child molestation, sexual and physical abuse of women and children, incest, etc. etc. But on a more important level, all the presentations shown in the documentary have an overriding message of hope, since the problems are presented in order to come to the first stage of healing: overcoming denial by talking about hurts, in the open. Thus the "Hope" in the title. There are also presenta-



tions and interviews by NAN leaders, showing what they have learned from the process about the need to build better communication links across "generation gaps" between elders and young people, and among elders, parents, and children.

"Denial, Healing and Hope" is a valuable resource for Native and non-Native communities confronting the problems of youth and the widespread urgent need for community healing. It will be of particular interest to Native Studies Departments, social work programs, health care and other front line workers, as well as librarians, and Native leaders searching for solutions to community issues. The documentary is appropriate for high school and post high school level students and instructors. It is available for purchase from Northern Insights, 72 Jean Street, Thunder Bay, ON P7A 5E9. Call (807) 345-5538.

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Service to remember lives lost, affected through suicide

by Dale Stelter

On Wednesday, February 22, a "candlelight" memorial service will be held in Lethbridge to

remember people whose lives have been lost, or affected in any way, by suicide.

The service will be held at the El Rancho Motor Inn from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., with Rev. Doug Shepherd, and Cpt. Sandra Hakkirk of the Salvation Army, presiding. The service is open to the general public, and is being held as a part of Suicide Awareness Week, which runs from February 19 to 25.

At the service, those who have died through suicide will be commemorated.

As well, the service will recognize that there are many people whose lives are affected, in an ongoing manner, by suicides and suicide attempts. The memorial service will thus act as a reminder to the public that such people need to remember, to grieve, and to heal.

The memorial service is being presented by the Community Inter-Agency Suicide Prevention Council, which is made up of about 20 organizations from the City of Lethbridge and rural communities.

For further information, you can contact John Dubé, Director of the Suicide Prevention Program of Southwestern Alberta, at (403) 327-5724. The fax number is 329-4924, and the mailing address is 1107, 2nd Ave. N North, Lethbridge,



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The Suicide Prevention Program of Southwestern Alberta is a program operated by Lethbridge Family Services.

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Conference to examine respite care services

The media often carries reminders of the two-edged sword of home care of people with special needs. There is no question that people with disabilities would prefer to live at home and participate in the life of their communities. However, there is also tremendous strain placed on the family caregivers. Respite services allows family caregivers to take a break.

In addition to family supports, respite care planners seek to utilize natural supports in the community to assist caregivers.

Rendezvous on Respite is a global conference on short-term care to be held March 6-8, 1995, in Thunder Bay, Ontario. The conference is hosted by Wesway, a non-profit organization in Thunder Bay that has been providing personalized respite support services for fifteen years.

"Wesway builds community partnerships and promotes inclusion through community development. We envision a model of respite support services to meet the needs of a community with respect and dignity," explained Michael Civitella, Wesway executive director. "The conference will include a research component which will examine the trend for respite services. Caring for people with special needs at home will become a greater part of the health services delivery system as time goes by."

Because of the changes in the delivery of human services, Wesway realized the need for this conference to raise awareness about respite care. According to Wesway respite must be considered an essential service. Although the shift towards more community based services is a positive one, family caregivers must be adequately supported. Lack of support may at times end in tragedy.

Examples of the support breakdown have occurred recently in Hamilton, Ontario, and North Battleford, Saskatchewan ending in sensational tragedy.

"Unless supports such as respite services are made available to replace institutions and basic services, there will be increasing numbers of these tragedies," remarked Civitella.

Since 1973 Wesway has been keenly aware of the changing needs of families. "The clients requiring our services come from all age groups and disabilities," he noted. "The respite care is designed on a personal service basis, with individual needs given the first consideration. Family caregivers give our workers instructions which we follow."

There are a number of ways the respite can be arranged. Wesway offers staff and volunteer based models. The host family model is a unique service with volunteer families welcoming a child or adult into their home to provide regular or interim respite care and support.

Wesway's Respite Home provides a home-like setting with trained staff who are able to practice with the participant social, recreational and daily living skills for discovery and development. Home Choices is an option where a trained respite worker provides service in the family home, a valued service especially chosen for young children with high medical needs, and older adults. Community Friends are volunteers acting as connectors to social and recreational opportunities in the community.

"There are approximately seventy host families who provide respite services in the community," said Civitella. "These families may devote every second weekend to providing a home to a disabled person whose primary care-givers require a rest."



Respite is not unique to Canada. Many countries have programs that provide relief to care-givers.

Rendezvous on Respite is an international conference. Representation is being sent from Australia, Scotland, USA, Caribbean, Japan, Sweden, England, and all Canadian provinces.

Workshops will include a component which focusses on First Nations, and a sweet-grass ceremony will be held.

"First Nations communities on the path to self-government have a unique opportunity to develop health care systems that involve the concept of respite care. There is great potential in those communities where family and community ties are strong, where this kind of value already exists," he said.

For further information about the conference you are encouraged to phone Wesway at (807) 623-2353, or fax (807) 623-6413.

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LEGEND

Why the trees are split by lightning is provided by the Lac La Ronge Band, Curriculum Resource Unit who are dedicated to providing quality educational resources to all the people of the First Nations.

Why the trees are split by lightning

Collected and illustrated by: James Ratt
Told by: Matilda Halkett

One fall, many years ago, when the world was young a swarm of mosquitoes (Sukimesuk) went searching for a warm place to stay for the winter. One mosquito suggested that they should stay in the lodge of Umisk, the beaver, but others felt Umisk would keep waking them during their long sleep.



Other mosquitoes suggested the homes of the Indians, but it was decided that it would be too smoky there.

One mosquito said, "We should fly to the cliffs of the thunderbirds to stay for the winter."

So the swarm of mosquitoes flew up to the nests of the Pithesiwuk. The mosquitoes were asked many questions when they arrived at the home of the thunderbirds. The Chief thunderbird noticed the mosquitoes' stomachs were full of red blood.



"Where did you get the blood that's in your stomachs?" enquired the thunderbird.

One of the mosquitoes flew up close to him and said, "We get this delicious blood from the trees in the forest."

Later that evening, a great storm settled over the woods down below. The Pithesiwuk hurled bolts of lightning at the tall trees of the forest.

Today, whenever the Indian people see trees split by lightning, they remind us that it is the thunderbirds searching for the blood that the mosquitoes had told them about.



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Indian Rights for Indian Women role models

by Janet Nattress

Nellie Carlson was the second woman in Alberta to receive a Person's Case Award in 1987/88 when she was honoured for working on a dream to promote university careers for Aboriginal people.

She was one of four Aboriginal women who met with the Dean of Medicine in 1970. They changed requirements for students of Aboriginal ancestry, and that enabled them to enter a wider range of professional study areas than ever before.

"We lobbied for Indian Rights for Indian Women" with a vision that stirred things up at the university to make it equal for Native people.

That vision or goal won Carlson a prestigious award for political involvement. The Person's Case Award and pin recognised her contribu-



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tions to this important change for her people.

- Four requirements of their goal were:
- to have a second language program at the University of Alberta;
 - to ensure that Metis and non-status Indians be given a smoother transition to university studies;
 - to have the university set a reasonable entrance for them—65%; and
 - to have all departments open doors to Aboriginal people.

"Years ago it used to be just social work and teaching they were taking. Now it's engineers and doctors," Carlson said.

The Faculty of Medicine now provides two places each year for students of Aboriginal an-

cestry to become doctors at the U of A.

Carlson's award included a round silver pin with four human figures on it, symbolic of the political change she and the other three women achieved for their Native people.

October 17, 1994 marked the anniversary, for Carlson, of the passing of another member of the original women's group—Isobel Munroe, who died several years ago. Women's Day, October 18, is also a day each year for Carlson to remember Indian Rights for Indian Women.

As a founding member of the Indian Rights group, Carlson, now 67, shared the groundwork with this friend, made university policy change regarding education of Aboriginal people, and is now working on new projects for Native people.

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BOOK REVIEW

STOLEN CONTINENTS

The Americas through Indian Eyes since 1492

by Ronald Wright

Published by Houghton Mifflin, 1992

Review by Suzanne Batten

Stolen Continents recounts the discovery and savage exploits of the New World by the Europeans, revealing this history through authentic speech and writings of five peoples—Aztec, Maya, Inca, Cherokee, and Iroquois—over a five hundred year period.

The myth of conventional history is explained, leading to facts previously unknown to many. For example, within decades of Columbus' landfall in the Western World, most of the approximate 100 million Native Americans (one-fifth of the world's population at the time) were dead, their entire existence destroyed. And that has led us to believe that the Natives' battle with the invaders is now finished, irrevocable; that ancient culture has died and cannot be rejuvenated. America's First Nations were regarded as primitive and easily defeated, with no say in the matter. Unlike Africa or Asia, America never saw its colonizers leave, but many nations have survived, and some are on the threshold of revival.

Wright admits that the past cannot be changed, but what we make of it can, and infers that the new settlers will never take solid root in North American soil until they confront what is masked by their erroneous history and make reparation to the holocaust that began five hundred years ago. A good way to start, he suggests, would be by teaching the other side of their history—the dark, true side—in their schools. And more practically, white governments could begin admitting what their predecessors have done and begin honouring their own treaties. Modern day European rulers of the New World should offer real equality, not annihilation disguised as "integration", nor the pseudo-liberty of citizenship in the "newly" settled country where the Native person will always be outnumbered, outwitted, and outvoted.

North America's past is explained in three parts: the Invasion, the Resistance, and the Rebirth. Photos and pictures of Native people throughout the ages accompany the text. It is complemented by enlightening quotes of Native peoples and Invaders, some dated as far back as 1525, and as recently as 1990.

It also examines the Oka uprising of 1992, when Canada's unsightly history, previously lost in the myths of the "winners' accounts, came back to haunt all residents (new and old) of the country. Wright explains the hidden war that the Dominion of Canada has waged against the Iroquois *Confederacy* since Canada became self-governing in 1897, and that the Oka land dispute actually began nearly three centuries ago and is rooted in the same cultural myopia as the pope's "donation" of America to Spain and Portugal.

The author, Ronald Wright, a resident of Ontario, was born in England and educated at Cambridge University. He is known as an acute observer with a vivid historical imagination. *Stolen Continents* is Wright's fifth book, and can be found in almost any bookstore. It is a true, viable history, which should be read by every member of our society so that our continent can progress to the honest, fair civilization it is fully capable of becoming.

Wishing you a happy, healthy and peaceful 1995



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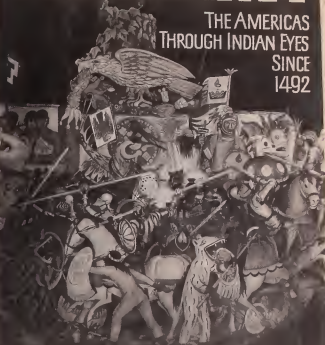
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RONALD WRIGHT Author of
TIME AMONG
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First Speaker for the AFVAA (Ontario) Denis Lacroix summarizes the group's goals, "We are committed to the vision of asserting our own knowledge, ways of creating, and to serve our needs and the needs of our communities through our art. We wish to honour the diversity of perspectives, stories and the experience of Aboriginal people and share these with other cultures."

V Tape executive director Kim Tomczak is enthusiastic about this organization's involvement. "V Tape is very pleased to be working with the AFVAA Ontario to increase the visibility of Aboriginal produced video works both inside and outside the Aboriginal communities. At V Tape, we have regular requests for works by Aboriginal artists; this project will ensure that audiences have access to these tapes."

Founded in 1980, V Tape is a national service organization with the emphasis on increasing audience awareness and appreciation of contemporary media arts. V Tape provides a national cataloguing service for video artists with a data base of over 3,200 titles that is available for extensive cross-referencing. V Tape also operates as an international distribution for over 1,300 of these catalogued titles.

The Aboriginal Film & Video Art Alliance represents and encourages the community of Aboriginal Film & Video Art Artists; with a view to develop skills, encourage production, facilitate communication and to build identity and solidarity among Aboriginal artists.

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